

Message Text

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ACTION DHA-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 SCA-00
AID-05 HEW-04 /067 W
-----055982 121201Z /50

R 120645Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6046
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 20161

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM ORIG FROM UDORN SEPT 10, ACTION BANGKOK
INFO VIENTIANE, HERewith RPTD FOR YOUR INFO: QTE:

C O N F I D E N T I A L UDORN 0152

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SREF TH LA
SUBJECT: NONG KHAI REFUGEE SITUATION

REF: (A) UDORN 0144 (B) UDORN 0150 (C) UDORN 0151

1. CONREP VISITED NONG KHAI BORDER POINT AND THA BO
DISTRICT TOWN SEPTEMBER 9 AND 10 AND OBTAINED FOL-
LOWING INFORMATION:

2. STATUS OF 69 REFUGEES REMAINS UNCHANGED. IN VIEW
OF FORNMIN UPADIT'S STATEMENT TO PRESS SEPTEMBER 7
THAT NO ACTION REGARDING THEIR CASE WOULD BE TAKEN
UNTIL HIS RETURN FROM JAPAN, AS REPORTED PARA1 REF B,
WE SUGGEST, UNLESS EMBASSY BANGKOK BELIEVES IT IS
NECESSARY, THAT WE SUSPEND OUR DAILY REPORTS ON THIS
GROUP OF REFUGEES. WE WILL ATTEMPT, OF COURSE, TO KEEP
YOU INFORMED SHOULD THIS SITUATION BECOME ACTIVE
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AGAIN IN THE FUTURE.

3. IN A RELATED DEVELOPMENT, NONG KHAI IMMIGRATION
OFFICE CONFIRMED TO CONREP SEPTEMBER 10 SUBSTANCE OF
BANGKOK POST SEPTEMBER 9 REPORT THAT THAI OFFICIALS
TURNED BACK ONE SINO-LAO AND FOUR LOWLAND ETHNIC LAO
(THREE ADULTS AND ONE CHILD) WHO ATTEMPTED TO ENTER

NONG KHAI BORDER POINT VIA RIVER TAXI FROM THA DEUA.
THIS MAKES TOTAL OF APPROXIMATELY 35-40 REFUGEES
THAT HAVE BEEN DENIED ENTRY AT NONG KHAI BORDER
CROSSING DURING LAST TEN DAYS.

4. AT SAME TIME IMMIGRATION OFFICE INFORMED CONREP

THAT THEY HAVE PERMITTED FPVZH SINO-LAO AND THREE
LOWLAND ETHNIC LAO WITH BORDER PASSES TO ENTER NONG
KHAI TO VISIT RELATIVES AND TRADE FOR THREE DAY .
HOWEVER, AS PART OF NEW IMMIGRATION PROCEDURES,
THESE VISITORS HAD TO DEPOSIT BONDS OF 20,000 BAHT
PER ADULT AND 10,000 BAHT PER CHILD WITH IMMIGRATION
OFFICIALS WHICH THEY WILL FORFEIT IF THEY DO NOT
RETURN TO LAOS WITHIN THE ALLOTTED THREE DAYS.

5. DURING TRIP TO THA BO DISTRICT TOWN, NONG KHAI
PROVINCE, SEPTEMBER 9, DEPUTY DISTRICT POLICE CHIEF
TOLD CONREP THAT THERE WAS NO RPT NO TRUTH TO
BANGKOK WORLD REPORT SEPTEMBER 8, THAT 180 SINO-LAO,
VIETNAMESE-LAO AND LOWLAND ETHNIC LAO ARE UNDER
DETENTION AT DISTRICT POLICE STATION AWAITING REPAT-
RIATION TO LAOS. DEPUTY DISTRICT POLICE CHIEF STATED
THAT HE PRESENTLY HAD IN HIS CUSTODY 51 REFUGEES
FROM LAOS ALL OF WHOM, EXCEPT FOR TEN VIETNAMESE-LAO,
ARE ETHNIC LAO.

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6. HE SAID THAT THIS GROUP OF REFUGEES, WHO FLED
TO THA BO FROM VIENTIANE THIS PAST WEEK, CROSSED
MEKONG RIVER AT NIGHT IN SMALL BOATS WITHOUT PERMISSION
FROM LPDR AUTHORITIES. HE ADDED THAT REFUGEES SAID
THEY HAD HIRED GUIDES TO TAKE THEM ACROSS THE RIVER
WHO CHARGED THEM ABOUT 1500 BAHT PER PERSON.

7. DEPUTY DISTRICT POLICE CHIEF STATED FURTHER THAT
THESE REFUGEES ARE BEING PROCESSED IN STANDARD MANNER
AS ILLEGAL ENTRANTS. HE SAID THAT HE HAS RECEIVED
NO RPT NO INSTRUCTIONS TO SEND THEM BACK TO LAOS.

8. WITH REGARD TO RATE OF REFUGEE INFLUX, DEPUTY
DISTRICT POLICE CHIEF SAID THAT REFUGEE ARRIVALS
PICKED UP BY POLICE HAVE BEEN AVERAGING 2-3 PER DAY
AND 75-100 PER MONTH. HOWEVER, HE NOTED THAT IN AUGUST
NUMBER OF NEW ARRIVALS INCREASED TO 220.
WHEN QUERIED CONCERNING HIS IMPRESSION OF REFUGEES'
MOTIVATION IN FLEEING TO THAILAND, HE STATED THAT
MANY OF THEM APPEAR TO COME IN RESPONSE TO LETTERS
FROM RELATIVES AND FRIENDS IN NONG KHAI CAMP. HE ALSO

NOTED THAT MAJORITY OF REFUGEE ARRIVALS THIS PAST WEEK CLAIMED THEY LEFT VIENTIANE BECAUSE THEY FEARED THAT PATHET LAO (PL) WERE GOING TO SEND THEM TO NEW SEMINAR THIS SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 11.

9. COMMENT: BASED ON ABOVE, AND AS NOTED PARA 5 REF A, RTG POLICY OF TURNING BACK REFUGEES FROM LAOS APPEARS, AT PRESENT, TO BE STILL CONFINED TO NONG KHAI BORDER POINT. CONREP WHO VISITED BORDER POINT SEPTEMBER 9 REPORTS THAT NEW STRICT PROCEDURES FOR PROCESSING VISITORS TRANSITTING IMMIGRATION BUILDING, ARE BEING VIGOROUSLY CARRIED OUT.

10. WITH REGARD TO RATE OF REFUGEE INFLUX WE HOPE
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TO HAVE BY LATE AFTERNOON SEPTEMBER 12, TABULATION OF IMMIGRATION OFFICE MONTHLY FIGURES THIS YEAR FOR NONG KHAI CAPITAL DISTRICT AND FOUR OTHER DISTRICTS WHICH SERVE AS PRINCIPAL ENTRY POINTS FOR REFUGEES ARRIVING IN PROVINCE. ACCORDING TO FIGURES WE HAVE ALREADY OBTAINED FOR SRI CHIANG MAI AND THA BO DISTRICTS, INCREASE OF REFUGEE ARRIVALS IN AUGUST WAS MARKED AND APPEARS TO BE CONTINUING AT SAME LEVEL THUS FAR THIS MONTH.
FINNEY UNQTE WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUGEES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 12-Sep-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977BANGKO20161
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770329-0817
Format: TEL
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770976/aaaaclo.tel
Line Count: 146
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 9e1c8648-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION DHA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 UDORN 144, 77 UDORN 150, 77 UDORN 151
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1313970
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NONG KHAI REFUGEE SITUATION
TAGS: SREF, TH, LA
To: STATE PARIS
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/9e1c8648-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009